Today’s Session

• **REG Coordinator & Ethics Administrator**
  - Michelle Manios, PAS 3013, [regadmin@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:regadmin@uwaterloo.ca)

• **Library liaison**
  - Tim Ireland PAS 3013, [regadmin@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:regadmin@uwaterloo.ca)

• **Psych 499 Coordinator**
  - Richard Eibach, PAS 3053, [reibach@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:reibach@uwaterloo.ca)
• **The Honours Thesis is a unique opportunity**
  
  - apprenticeship in how to conduct research from developing a hypothesis through to writing an empirical paper
  
  - individual interaction and collaboration with faculty member and graduate students
  
  - capstone experience for undergraduate honours degree
  
  - essential preparation for graduate studies
General Remarks

• **Finding Information on Psych Dept. Webpage**
  – Current Undergrad Students
    • Courses
      – Psych 499 A/B/C
  • **Information on:**
    – Honours thesis handbook (updated)
    – Orientation meetings
    – Deadlines & Important dates
    – Oral Presentation Schedule
    – Contact information
    – And more….. (e.g., where to find a sample thesis)
Agenda

- Supervisors
- Course format
- Common problems
- Additional opportunities
Finding a supervisor

- Contact faculty members after you’ve enrolled in Psych 499A
- You might have to ask several different profs
- Ordinarily, make email contact first with:
  - Unofficial transcript
  - Statement of interest (why do you want to work with this particular faculty member)
  - What terms you hope to enroll in Psych 499A/B/C
  - Request an appointment to meet in person
Selecting a thesis topic

- Consider an on-going project in the faculty member’s lab or suggest an idea of your own

- If suggesting your own topic,
  
  - Be prepared to explain why this topic interests you
  
  - What you’ve already read on this topic
  
  - Topic needs to be narrow enough to develop a clear research question and specific, testable hypotheses
Supervision styles

- Some are structured, others less so
- Up to you to establish and maintain regular contact with supervisor
- Plan accordingly if supervisor is going on sabbatical
- Be sure to clarify and manage expectations
  - How often will you check in (virtually or f-to-f)?
  - Level of independence expected
  - Deadlines
• **Supervisors are useful to you beyond the thesis**
  
  – Letters of reference
  
  – Information about:
    
    • applying for scholarships
    
    • applying to grad programs
• Psych 499 enrollment requires a Psych average of 82%

• Only contact potential supervisors when you’re officially enrolled in 499A
There are 3 components:

- 499A: literature review, research question(s), & thesis reviewer nominations
- 499B: research design, proposal, & presentation
- 499C: data collection, analysis, & final write-up

Psych 499 can take 2 to 5 terms

- Many students complete in 2 terms (499A/B in term 1, 499C in term 2)
- Up to 5 terms might be necessary for coop students

Be flexible
Registering for 499A vs. 499A&B
- Email name of thesis supervisor by Jan 12 to Nadine Quehl: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca

499A only –
- Submit progress report to Richard Eibach’s mailbox by noon on April 24th
- Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by April 4th
- Complete your presentation the following term
- **499A&B** –
  - Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by Jan 19th
  - If you COMPLETE 499B, then you do NOT need to hand in 499A progress report
  - If you do not complete 499B even though registered for it, you MUST complete progress report
  - TIP: book 499B presentation slot early!

- At the end of 499C you will submit your final thesis
Thesis reviewer nominations

- Email the following to Richard, reibach@uwaterloo.ca
  - brief description of thesis topic (approx. 50 words)
  - names of 3 faculty members who you’re nominating as reviewer

Richard will contact faculty members to find out if they’re available

Reviewer responsibilities:

- read and attend 499B proposal presentation and provide feedback
- read 499C thesis paper
- help assign final grade
• **Progress Report 499A**
  
  – 5-10 pages
  
  – General statement about research area
  
  – A brief description of relevant literature
  
  – The research question
  
  – Outline of further steps
• **Research Proposal 499B**
  – Due 2 business days before your oral presentation date (Thurs 4:30pm for a Tues presentation)
  – 10-15 pages
  – Title, Abstract
  – Concise background literature & clear statement of research questions/hypotheses
  – Method (measures/experimental procedures)
  – Expected Results
    • Plans for data analysis & Proposed timeline to complete project
  – Approved by supervisor (signed) and submitted to mailbox of your thesis reviewer
Oral presentation for 499B

- 50 min; talk 20-25 min; remainder for discussion
- Use PowerPoint; Practice in advance
- Explain your rationale, purpose, methods, and hypotheses
- Not formally graded
- Reviewer will ask general questions, probe your knowledge, make suggestions
- Attend other students’ presentations to familiarize yourself with format

(Note: Oral presentation before data collection)
Course Issues

• 499C
  – Ethics approval (or end of 499B)
  – Data collection
  – Analysis
  – Write up (more on next slide)
Final thesis paper

• Final Report 499C
  – Due by April 16th
  – 20-30 pages
  – Title, Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review & Hypotheses, Method, Results, General Discussion, References, Tables & Figures, Appendices
  – Submit an electronic version and print copy to Nadine Quehl: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca
  – Graded by Supervisor who comments and suggests a grade range, and 499 Reviewer, who comments and assigns final grade
    – same grade applied retroactively to 499A/B/C
Common Problems

- Don’t allow enough time for:
  - ethics clearance
  - data collection
  - data analysis
  - writing multiple drafts of the final product

- Final product is not APA format or is missing:
  - abstract
  - introduction/overview before literature review
  - clear and specific statement of hypotheses
  - writing for a general psych audience
• **Ontario Undergraduate Psychology Thesis Conference**
  – an informal forum for students in Ontario to present a summary of their theses
  – either orally or in poster format
  – to a friendly and enthusiastic audience of peers and to discuss your work with others who have similar interests

• **Friday, May 4th (abstract due earlier) at Ryerson University**

• **No registration fee for presenters or faculty members and lunch is provided**

• **Opportunity to network with Psychology students and faculty at other universities**

• **Participants report that the event is very worthwhile and enjoyable**

• **Looks great on graduate school applications**
Who Can Answer Questions

• Nadine Quehl, Psych 499 course administrator
  – Paperwork (enrolment, extensions, etc.)
  – Scheduling 499B presentation
  – Email: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca

• Richard Eibach, Thesis Coordinator
  – Should I be taking the thesis?
  – Issues with your supervisor
  – Email: reibach@uwaterloo.ca

• Your thesis supervisor
  – Research question & literature, designing your study, analyzing data, writing final product
• Thesis Awards

  – Recognize exceptional performance throughout all stages of the thesis project

  – Awarded annually in June for theses completed the prior three terms

  – Nominated by Supervisor
You are responsible for following research integrity standards and university policies

Information/resources about responsible research conduct, FAQs etc.

Link:

https://uwaterloo.ca/research/office-research-ethics/research-integrity/training-and-resources
• **Consider creating a short "video snapshot" of your work.**
  – Great way to tell others about your thesis & your experience at UW
  – Create a 1-2 min. video where you explain what you researched and what you found out
  – Use a smartphone or Department’s video camera

• **Logistics**
  – Make your video after you submit 499C paper (within 2 weeks please)
  – You are responsible for emailing your video to Nadine Quehl (nquehl@uwaterloo.ca)
  – We will review, upload to the Psych Dept. website, and let you know when you can share the link with others

• **Note: Completing a video is optional**
  – Whether or not you choose to capture your thesis on video will in no way affect your grade in PSYCH 499 or eligibility for thesis awards